

**NS ALL BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS SUMMIT  
NORTH SMITHFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**MARCH 9, 2013  
8:30 A.M.**

Special Joint Meeting of the North Smithfield Town Council and the following North Smithfield boards and commissions (Budget Commission, Conservation Commission, Economic Development Commission, Juvenile Hearing Board, Parks and Recreation Commission, Redevelopment Agency, School Committee, Planning Board, Zoning Board, Sewer Commission, Personnel Board, Public Safety Commission, and Historic District Commission)

Roll call:

Town Council: Ms. Alves, Mr. McGee, Mr. Zwolenski and Mr. Flaherty

Budget Committee: Mr. Puccetti, Ms. Vallee, Mr. Zambarano and Mr. Clifford

Conservation Commission: Mr. Johnson

Economic Development Commission: Mr. Puccetti, Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Nault

Historic District Commission: Mr. de Rezendes and Mr. Harris

Juvenile Hearing Board: Mr. Hammann, Ms. Lopes, Mr. Sutherland and Co-ordinator Jamie Hendrickson

Parks & Recreation Commission: Mr. Barry, Mr. Gagnon and Mr. Paul

Personnel Board: Mr. Leclerc and Mrs. Rapko

Planning Board: Mr. Bassett, Ms. Jones, Mr. Naylor, Ms. Tunnicliffe and Town Planner Ericson

Public Safety Commission: Mr. Sutherland

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Redevelopment Agency: Mr. Freitas, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Leclerc and Mr. Nault

School Committee: Mr. Connell and Superintendent Lindberg

Sewer Commission: Mr. Houde and Mr. Winkleman

Zoning Board: Mr. Marcantonio, Mr. Martin, Mr. Scarpelli and Mr. Jühr

Also in attendance were Town Administrator Hamilton, Town Solicitor Lombardi, Ms. Leslie Tato, Director of Regulatory Reform, and Facilitator Dr. Victor Profughi.

The joint meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. Mr. Flaherty opened the meeting reviewing the following purpose and goals:

**Purpose:** To better coordinate and leverage the time and talent of those engaged in shaping the quality of life and future of North Smithfield. To develop input for future decision making by the Town Council and various boards and commissions.

**Goals:** Improved communication and understanding among all boards and commissions, their duties, scope and interdependence; Alignment of individual board and commission priorities with Town Council adopted Workplan as it may be amended from time to time; Identification of challenges that impede the effectiveness of elected/appointed officials and staff; Initial discussion of proposals for improvement that emerge from participants.

Mr. Flaherty reviewed the legal requirements for posting and documenting the meeting.

Participants were introduced and the forum facilitator Dr. Profughi reviewed the agenda, workshop logistics and ground rules for participation.

The facilitator reviewed the Town Council approved Workplan, calling on those with particular knowledge to explain workplan goals, objectives and strategies.

Ms. Leslie Tato, Director of Regulatory Reform, spoke about the permitting process for small businesses.

Mr. Michael Cassidy of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Inc. explained the legislation that has been enacted over the past few years and how it has financially affected National Park Services and surrounding historic districts.

Participants met in small groups to discuss the Town Council approved workplan and to develop a list of: 1.) Goals missing from Workplan, 2.) Top challenges that impede the effectiveness of appointed/elected officials and staff, 3.) Strategies for advancing goals, improving outcomes, and 4.) Suggested Charter changes to improve the way North Smithfield does business. The items were listed on flip charts.

Boards and commission members then reported out, describing the list of ideas raised during the breakout discussion.

Participants used colored dots stuck to the flip charts to rate the priority of various ideas that were raised.

Facilitator Profughi reviewed the ideas and suggestions, their relative ratings, summed up the initial conclusions and explained that the results would be published and shared with each board and commission.

The following goals, challenges, strategies and suggested charter changes were listed with the corresponding number of colored dots.

**Goals missing from Town Council-approved Workplan:**

**-Economic Development Commission and Redevelopment Agency**

- Combine monthly meetings of EDC and RA due to shared interests - post separate meeting notices and minutes (no dots)

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- Talk with Administrator and Solicitor regarding options on having digital communications platform to allow public input and output from EDC and RA (8 dots)
- Develop a detailed process checklist of clear expectations for property owners looking to invest in MU1, MU2 zones with Town Planner (7 dots)

- Develop clear understanding, strategies and tactics with Town Council on how to execute redevelopment plan for Branch Village (no dots)

#### -Zoning Board of Review

- Reform zoning and permitting process (7 dots)
- Applicants better informed of process (9 dots)

#### -Budget Committee

- Assist in the development of 3 or 5-year budget forecasting for all departments (e.g. proforma statements) (10 dots)
- Develop a system of financial compliance with established budgets (e.g. line item transfers) (3 dots)
- Participate with boards and committees throughout the year on issues requiring financial review or financial impact statements (e.g. Marshfield Commons, group homes, subdivisions, new building construction for the town, existing space use, Dowling Village) (1 dot)

#### -Planning Board, School Committee, Conservation Committee

- Space needs, assess/capacity/utilization, max use of space (12 dots)
- Town-wide service sharing/efficiency (11 dots)
- Revise town Comprehensive Plan (no dots)
- Digital archiving of all local government records (4 dots)

#### -Historic District Commission

- Expand Slatersville Historic District (5 dots)
- Inclusion of Forestdale/Upgrading Heritage Hall, Forestdale SH (3 dots)
- Archiving of historical items in Forestdale School, Heritage Hall (1 dot)
- Re-surveying of Union Village Historic District (no dots)
- Formal set of standards and guidelines (2 dots)

#### -Personnel Board

- Consistency in hiring process (10 dots)

#### -Town Council

- Communications and prompt decisions (14 dots)
- Development of Branch Village (7 dots)

### **Top challenges that impede effectiveness of appointed/elected officials:**

#### -Economic Development Commission and Redevelopment Agency

- Open communication; Political and funding support (10 dots)

#### -Zoning Board of Review

- Applicants not prepared/Last minute exhibits cause delay (no dots)
- Enforcement of zoning (27 dots)
- Better meeting location (no dots)

#### -Budget Committee

- More comprehensive detail (emphasis in numbers, reader-friendly format) (7 dots)

#### -Planning Board, School Committee, Conservation Committee

- Objective limitations/realistic comprehensive (no dots)
- Silo turf wars (11 dots)
- Will they help? (no dots)

#### -Historic District Commission

- Grants for archiving history items (3 dots)

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- Understanding role of HDC (inclusion, advisory role, transparency with administration) (1 dot)

#### -Personnel Board

- Lack of communication due to infrequency of new hires (4 dots)

#### -Town Council

- Don't have control of school space/community space (16 dots)
- Gradual shift to same meeting night for most/all other boards (4 dots)
- Lack of decision making (2 dots)
- Zoning ordinances aren't enforced (12 dots)

### **Strategies for Advancing Goals, Improving Outcomes**

#### -Zoning Board

- Use website for forms and fees (no dots)
- Material checklist - Building Inspector (7 dots)

#### -Budget Committee

- Submission of electronic files for all transmission of budgets, along with hard copy (10 dots)
- Clarify expectations in advance (1 dot)
- Standardize the system for requesting, reviewing and monitoring budgets and expenditure variances throughout the year (4 dots)
- Flowchart for board involvement (1 dot)

#### -Planning Board, School Committee, Conservation Committee

- Committee - Planning, School, Admin. Building Committee (no dots)
- Centralized prioritization/coordination (no dots)
- Joint board meetings for specific town goals (7 dots)
- Adopt Bryant University (9 dots)

#### -Historic District Commission

- Co-ordinate with RI Historic Preservation Commission (3 dots)

#### -Personnel Board

- Create a "new-hire" application/checklist (7 dots)

#### -Town Council

- Connect with certain boards and commissions (6 dots)

### **Suggested Charter Changes to Improve the Way North Smithfield Does Business**

#### -Budget Committee

- Change budget format requirements (e.g. 3-year expenditure history, cost trending) (4 dots)
- Change timeline for budget recommendation (7 dots)

-Planning Board, School Committee, Conservation Committee

- Inconsistencies between Charter and State Law (8 dots)

**MOTION** by Mr. Flaherty, seconded by Mr. Zwolenski, and voted 4 to 0 on an aye vote to adjourn at 12:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John A. Flaherty, Council President  
Debra A. Todd, Town Clerk